

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-17 remain in this application. Claims 1, 2, 11 and 17 have been amended, claims 18-27 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 28-33 have been added.

Applicants affirm the election of group I, claims 1-17, and further request consideration of new claims 28-33.

1. Information Disclosure Statement

In response to the request for a proper Information Disclosure Statement, please find the attached IDs in the proper format for the Examiner's consideration.

2. Drawing Objection

The objection to the drawings is addressed by amendment of the specification in paragraph [0038] to correct typographical error for a reference numeral. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests removal of the objection of the drawing.

2. Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112

Claims 1-16 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants submit that it is well known in the art that “drying a green ceramic article” means driving off water from the green ceramic article. For example, US 5,406,058 col. 1 lines 19-44 discusses drying a green ceramic article in a dielectric oven:

“... In a typical manufacturing process, as the wet or green log or ceramic structure leaves the extruder ... [and] ... the logs are dried. The dried logs are then cut and fired to form the catalyst material supports. ... the log leaving the extruder has a high water content and evaporation from the log begins immediately upon its exit from the extruder. Generally, the drying is not uniform. For instance, the bottom of the log is much dryer than the top of the log. It is theorized that the underside of the log dries faster than the rest of the material due to its proximity to the lower electrode in the dielectric oven. Also, both the leading and trailing surfaces of the log tend to lose water very slowly, often retaining all or close to all of its original water...”

Claim 1 has been amended to omit “dried” green ceramic article to avoid any doubt that the green ceramic article still contains oil-based component after the “drying”. Also, “drying” has been omitted from Claim 17.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the rejection has been overcome, and request withdrawal of the rejection.

3. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-2, 13-15, 17 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Lundsager (US Patent No. 4900698).

In view of the claims as amended, the rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to include a binder and an aqueous solvent for the binder in the mixture of components.

Applicants submit that Lundsager teaches a binder which is a polymer alone or a combination of a polymer and a plasticizer (see col. 17, lines 19-26). Lundsager does not teach or even suggest an aqueous solvent for the binder, nor a water soluble binder.

4. Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 3-5 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698) as applied in claim 1 above, further in view of Xun (US Patent No. 6,287,510).

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698) and Xun (US Patent No. 6,287,510) as applied to claim 5 above, further in view of Matsubara et al. (US Patent No. 4,902,459).

Claims 7-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698), Xun (US Patent No. 6,287,510) and Matsubara et al. (US Patent No. 4,902,459) as applied to claim 6 above.

Claims 10-12 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698), Xun (US Patent No. 6,287,510) and Matsubara et al. (US Patent No. 4,902,459) as applied to claim 7 above, further in view of Wiech Jr. (US Patent No. 4,717,340).

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698) as applied to claim 1 above, further in view of Nakajima et al. (US Patent No. 4,731,208).

Claims 1-9, 13-17 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 of US Patent No. 6,287,510 in view of Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698).

In view of the claims as amended, the rejections are traversed.

As noted above, Applicants submit that Lundsager teaches a binder which is a polymer alone or a combination of a polymer and a plasticizer (see col. 17, lines 19-26). Applicants submit that Lundsager does not teach or even suggest an aqueous solvent for the binder, nor a water soluble binder. Moreover, Applicants submit that Lundsager is directed to mixtures that include metals, which would provide significant changes in the reaction sequence as compared to the presently claimed processes. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the teachings of Lundsager should not be combined with the teachings of Xun. Furthermore, Matsubara at col. 3 lines 4-9 refers to the flash point of a polymer, not to the flash point of an oil-based component. Regarding claims 4-5, Lundsager does not teach or suggest any particular flow rate, let alone a range of flow rates.

Appl. No.: 10/688,168
Amdt. Dated: 1/26/2007
Reply to Office Action of: 10/26/2006

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-9, 13-17 on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 of US Patent No. 6,287,510 in view of Lundsager (US Patent No. 4,900,698), Applicants submit a terminal disclaimer to obviate the rejection.

5. Conclusion

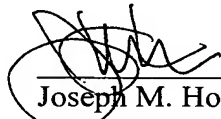
Based upon the above amendments, remarks, and papers of records, Applicants believe the pending claims of the above-captioned application are in allowable form and patentable over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Applicants believe that no extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely. Should Applicants be in error, Applicants respectfully request that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Joseph M. Homa at 607-974-9061.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: JAN. 26, 2007



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